

Plant a Tree on Arbor Day

Arbor Day is just around the corner. Everyone grab a shovel and get ready to plant a tree. But wait....before planting a tree, make sure you know how to do it correctly. How a tree is planted, and initially maintained, makes all the difference in the world. Too many people are content to simply plant a tree, but don't ensure that the tree has the chance to go on to live for many years. Planting a tree is making an investment in the future. Caring for and nurturing your young tree will pay dividends for years to come.

Tree Planting Tips

There are a few simple tips to remember when planting your tree this spring:

1. Prepare the perfect hole for planting.

- Dig the hole 23 times the width of the root ball. Do NOT dig deeper than root ball depth. Make the sides of the hole slant gradually outward.
- Container grown trees should have the plastic or metal containers completely removed. Carefully cut through any circling roots.

2. Plant the Tree.

- Gently place the tree in the hole. Partially backfill with the soil from the hole, water to settle the soil, then finish backfilling the hole. Tamp the soil gently, but do not step on the root ball.

A few pointers

While you may have finished planting, Arbor Day aficionados should remember these final touches:

- Remove tags and labels.
- Do not stake unless the tree has a large crown, or if the planting is situated on a site where wind or people may push the tree over. Stake for a maximum of one year.
- Prune only the damaged branches.
- Soak the soil well, making sure no air pockets form between roots. Wait until next year to fertilize.
- Spread 2"3" of mulch over the planting area, but do not place it up against the trunk.
- Be sure the root ball has plenty of water throughout the year.
- Come celebrate Arbor Day in Milpitas by planting trees at Jose Higuera Adobe Park on Saturday, April 25th from 9 – 11 am.

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